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ADDRESS

ON THE

PLACE OF ANCIENT GREECE

IN THE

PROVIDENTIAL ORDER OF THE WORLD:

DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,
ON THE THIRD OF NOVEMBER, 1865.

BY THE

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JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

A D D R E S S,

ſc. ſc.

MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, PROFESSORS, AND GENTLEMEN :

The subject on which I desire to address to you my parting words, is, the place of ancient Greece in the providential order of the world.

Even the pointed announcement of such a subject may seem to partake of paradox. No one, indeed, would think of denying that the people, who inhabited that little cluster of rugged mountains and of narrow vales, played a part, and a great part, upon the stage of history, and left a mark, not deep only, but indelible, upon the character of the human race. No one would deny that they have delivered to us brilliant examples of energy in action, and matchless productions of the mind and hand, models in letters and in art. Nor is there any doubt about the fact, that Christian Europe has during many generations assigned to Greece the largest share in the cultivation of the human mind. But this age, which questions much, questions naturally enough the propriety of the judgment, which has thus awarded her the place of honour in the career of general education. Her language, her history, her literature, and her art, are regarded as the privileged delight and separate entertainment of the few; but there is no

clear perception in the majority of minds, that all these have entered deeply into the common interests of mankind. Lastly, they are distinguished in so broad a manner from the teaching of the Gospel, nay in certain points and instances they are so much in conflict with the spirit of the Evangelical code, that there is a disposition to regard them as belonging exclusively to the secular order, as well as to the secondary, and if I may so speak ornamental, interests of life. To its secondary interests, because Greece does not propose to teach us how to choose a profession, or to make way in the world :—

“τί δέ μ’ ὠφελήσουσ’ οἱ ῥυθμοὶ πρὸς τᾷλφита;” *

To the secular order, because it is beyond doubt that we cannot obtain from her the lessons of true religion. Nay, she has sometimes almost assumed the attitude of its rival; for both the period of the revival of learning, and also more modern times, have supplied signal instances, in which her fascinations have well-nigh persuaded men of genius or of letters, Christian-born, to desert their allegiance to their faith, and endeavour to revive for themselves, at least in the region of the fancy, the worship once in use at her long-abandoned shrines.

Other reasons besides these have produced a practical indisposition to regard ancient Greece as having had a distinct, assignable, and most important place in the providential government of the world. Something that may be called religionism, rather

* Aristoph. *Neph.* v. 648.

than religion, has led us for the most part not indeed to deny in terms that God has been and is the God and Father and Governor of the whole human race, as well as of Jews and Christians, yet to think and act as if His providential eye and care had been confined in ancient times to the narrow valley of Jerusalem, and since the Advent to the Christian pale, or even to something which, enforcing some yet narrower limitation at our own arbitrary will, we think fit to call such. But surely He, who cared for the sixscore thousand persons in ancient Nineveh that could not distinguish between their right hand and their left, He without whom not a sparrow falls, He that shapes, in its minutest detail, even the inanimate world, and clothes the lily of the field with its beauty and its grace, He never forgot those sheep of His in the wilderness, but as, on the one hand, He solicited them, and bore witness to them of Himself, by never-ceasing bounty and by the law written in their hearts, so on the other hand in unseen modes He used them, as He is always using us, for either the willing, or if not the willing, then the unconscious or unwilling, furtherance and accomplishment of His designs. The real paradox then would be not to assert, but to deny or even to overlook, the part which may have been assigned to any race, and especially to a race of such unrivalled gifts, in that great and all-embracing plan for the rearing and training of the human children of our Father in heaven, which we call the Providential Government of the world.

Such preparation, ascertained and established upon the solid ground of fact, may be termed prophecy in action ; and is, if possible, yet stronger for the confirmation of belief, and yet more sublime in aspect as an illustration of Almighty greatness, than prophecy in word.

But in this Providential government there are diversities of operations. In this great house * there are vessels of gold and silver, vessels of wood and earth. In the sphere of common experience we see some human beings live and die, and furnish by their life no special lessons visible to man, but only that general teaching, in elementary and simple forms, which is derivable from every particle of human experience. Others there have been who, from the time when their young lives first, as it were, peeped over the horizon, seemed at once to

“Flame in the forehead of the morning sky ;” †

whose lengthening years have been but one growing splendour, and at the last who

“leave a lofty name,
A light, a landmark, on the cliffs of fame.” ‡

Now, it is not in the general, the ordinary, the elementary way, but it is in a high and special sense, that I claim for ancient Greece a marked, appropriated, distinctive place in the Providential order of the world. And I will set about explaining what I mean.

I presume that all philosophy, claiming to be

* 2 Tim. ii. 20.

† Lycidas.

‡ Moore.

Christian, regards the history of our race, from its earliest records down to the Incarnation and Advent of our Lord, as a preparation for that transcendent event, on which were to be hung thereafter the destinies of man.

Let us, however, examine more particularly that opinion which has prevailed in the world, sometimes sustained by argument, oftener by sufferance, sometimes lurking underground, and sometimes emboldened to assert itself in the face of day, that although the Divine care extends in a general way to all men, yet we are to look for this preparation, at least for the positive parts of it, nowhere except in the pages of the Old Testament, and in the history and traditions of the Patriarchs and the Jews. This opinion has what some of our fathers would have termed "a face of piety:" it has undoubtedly been held by pious persons, and urged in what are termed the interests of religion. But that face I am persuaded is a face only, a mask which ought to be stripped off, as it hides the reality from our view.

According to this theory, we are to consider the line of the patriarchs and the descendants of Abraham as exclusively the objects of any Divine dispensation which, operating in the times before the Advent, is to be reckoned as part of the preparation for the great event. To them we are to look as the guardians of all human excellence in all its infinite varieties; and when we seem to find it elsewhere, we are either to treat the phenomenon as spurious, or else, believing without sight, we are to consider it as

derived, through some hidden channel, from the stores communicated by Divine revelation to the favoured race. This theory found perhaps its fullest, nay even its most properly fanatical, development in the 'Paradise Regained' of Milton. There the works of the Greek intellect and imagination are depreciated in a strain of the utmost extravagance; and, what is worse, the extravagance is made to proceed from those Divine lips, all whose words were weighed and measured in the exactest balances and lines of truth. First, the proposition is advanced by the poet that divine inspiration precludes the need of any other knowledge, even "though granted true:" "but these," so proceeds the speech—

"But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm."

The Greek philosophers are dismissed, as a body, with wholesale condemnation: while Homer and the tragedians are stated, with a gravity in itself wonderful enough, to have learned the art of poetry from the Jews:—

"All our law and story strewed
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscribed,
Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
That pleased so well our victors' ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts derived."

The orators are set to compete with the Hebrew prophets:—

"Herein to our prophets far beneath
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government." *

A competition this, which would probably have

* 'Paradise Regained,' Book iv. 291, 334, 356.

caused the greatest astonishment to those to whom the prize in it is awarded.

It is difficult to understand how Milton's genius could have prompted him thus to pit against one another things really, in the main, incommensurable; or how his learning, which must have made him acquainted with the Greek philosophy, could have failed to impress him with the belief that men like Aristotle and Plato were earnest seekers after truth.

Warburton observes upon these passages, that they were in accordance with the fashion of the time. And it appears that, especially in the later years of Milton's life, there were a number of learned men, English and foreign, such as Bochart, Huet, Voss, Gale, and Bogan, who busied themselves in showing correspondences between the Hebrew and the Pagan traditions, and who in some instances, particularly that of Huet, Bishop of Avranches, pushed their undertaking into undue and fanciful detail. But I have not found that they propounded any doctrine in reference to the derivation of heathen literature from Jewish sources, either to the sweeping extent, or in the cynical spirit, of the 'Paradise Regained.' Their object appears to have been a different one, namely, to fortify the historical credit of the sacred records by tracing elsewhere matter essentially corresponding with their contents; either as clothed in contemporary disguises, or as flowing from a common fountain-head.

In truth, the seed-plot of this peculiar learning belongs to a much earlier and a more interesting

and important literature. Paganism, which had been for the two greatest races of the ancient world in their infancy a creed, and in their riper age a profession, did not, when assailed by the victorious advance of Christianity, retire from the intellectual battle-field without a desperate struggle, carried on in its behalf with all the resources of powerful and subtle intellects. As a revelation of the designs of God for the recovery and moral renovation of mankind, the Gospel was not unfairly required to give an account, not only of itself, but of everything else in the world that preceded or opposed it. The Pagan system, if it had nothing else, had at least one important advantage in the controversy. It represented a continuous unbroken tradition, dating from beyond the memory of man : it had come down from father to son through more than a hundred generations with an ostensible sameness and a very widely-extended sway ; and none could name the day when, in the two far-famed peninsulas that had given the breath of life to the ancient world, it did not exist and prevail.

Under these circumstances, it was most difficult for the Christian apologists to admit that there lay in the old religions of the world, and particularly in the Greek or the Latin mythology, any nucleus or germ of the primeval truth. For the logical consequence of such an admission might have seemed to be that they should not sweep the old religion off the face of the earth, but endeavour to reduce it to some imagined standard of its purer infancy : that they should not

destroy it, but reform it: whereas, on the contrary, their purpose was, and could not but be, not to reform but to destroy. They met, then, the traditional claims of Paganism by taking their stand upon the purer, clearer, and still older tradition of the Hebrews. They parried the negative value in argument of an undefined antiquity with the positive record of the creation of the world, and with the sublime exordium of the human race, propagated in a definite line from man to man, down to the firm ground of historic times. So far so good. But still they were obstinately confronted by a system conterminous both in space and in duration with the civilised world, and able, too, to say of itself, with some apparent truth, that when civilisation and culture themselves began they did not make or bring it, but found it on the ground before them. Thus upon the merely historic field the battle might have looked, to the ordinary spectator, like a drawn one; while it seemed needful for the dignity and high origin of the new religion to conquer not at one point but at all. Hence perhaps the tendency of the Christian apologists, in unconscious obedience to the exigencies of controversy, after they had proved by reasoning the truth and authority of the Gospel, and had smitten their enemy, as they did smite him, to the dust, by their moral arguments against Paganism, to accelerate its end, and to demolish the very last of its seeming titles, its antiquity of origin, by refusing to affiliate any part or parcel of it, at any point of time, to the stock of a primeval religion, and by contending that so

much of truth as was scattered through the rolls of its literature had been filtered in detail through successive media, from Greece to Rome, from Egypt to Greece, but was ultimately to be traced in every case to the ancient people of God, and to the records and traditions which had had an historical existence among them.

I turn now to the remarkable work of Eusebius, commonly called the ‘*Præparatio Evangelica*.’ In that work he sets forth the moral impurity, imbecility, impiety, and falseness of the Pagan system. He contrasts with it the marvellous prerogatives of the older Scriptures. In what lies beyond this province, he is not so injudicious as to depreciate the intellectual development of the Hellenic race, alike original and vast. But, he says they learned, in its elementary form, the “superstitious error” of their religion, which by their own genius they afterwards recast and adorned,* from Egyptian, Phœnician, and other foreign sources: but their glimpses of the Godhead, and whatever they had of instruction for the soul’s health, they obtained, by importation mediate or immediate, from the Hebrews only, except in as far as it was supplied them by the light of nature.†

The question here arises, if the Hellenic race got their religion from Phœnicia and Egypt, from whence did Egypt and Phœnicia obtain it? And here it is that we come upon the chief error into which Eusebius

* Note I.

† Note II.

was led by the controversial exigencies of his position. He treats the religions of the world as having been purely and wholly, even in their first beginnings, errors and inventions of the human mind, without any trace or manner of relationship to that Divine truth which, as he truly tells us, had been imparted to the Hebrews long before the days of Moses and the composition of the Pentateuch. According to him, the old religions were made up of worships offered to the heavenly bodies, to the powers of nature, to the spirits of departed men, to useful or important arts and inventions, and to the demonic race in its two families of the good and the evil.

He admits, in every part of his work, that he appears in the arena to maintain and justify the Christians as the authors of a schism in the religious world; and this admission it is, which, by the nature of his propositions and his argument, he converts into a boast.

The view taken by Eusebius was I apprehend that generally taken by the Christian apologists. Saint Clement of Alexandria* not only denies the originality of the Greeks in what they possessed of truth, but treats as a theft their appropriation of Hebrew ideas:† and fancifully, I might say whimsically, supports the charge by instances of plagiarism perpetrated by one Greek author on another. Justin Martyr‡ allows no higher parentage to the Greek mythology than the poets, who were bad enough, or,

* Strom. B. vi. p. 618, ed. Col. 1688.

† Note III.

‡ Cohortatio ad Græcos, 43, 51, 52.

still worse as he says, the philosophers. Lactantius* ascribes to fallen angels, or dæmons, the invention of image-worship. Theophilus† affirms that the gods of the heathen were dead men : Lactantius,‡ that they were *reges maximi et potentissimi*. But time does not permit and the argument does not require me to pursue this part of the subject into greater detail.§ Suffice it to say that the early Christian writers, not the narrow-minded men that many take them for, did not deny or disparage the intellectual prodigies of the great heathen races, of those marvellous philosophers as Eusebius often calls them, that Plato so eminently commended by his intellectual debtor the great Saint Augustine :|| nor did they make light of the voice of nature in the soul of man, nor of the Divine Government over the whole world at every period of its existence, nor of the truths to be found in ancient writers. But the defiled and putrescent system of religion which they found confronting them, formidable as it was from antiquity, wide extension, general consent, from the strength of habit, and from the tenacious grasp of powerful interests upon temporal possessions and advantages, this evil system they hunted down in argument without mercy, and did not admit to be an historical and traditional derivation from a primeval truth, which the common ancestry of the Semitic and the European races had once in common enjoyed.

* Div. Inst. ii. 16.

† Ad Autol. i. p. 75, A.

‡ Div. Inst. i. 8.

§ Note IV.

|| De Civ. Dei, viii. 4, and Contra Acad. iii. 37.

It can hardly be said that there was intentional unfairness in this proceeding. The Christian writers laboured under the same defect of critical knowledge and practice with their adversaries. They took the lives, deeds, and genealogies of the heathen deities, just as they found them in the popular creed, for the starting-points of their argument. Their immediate business was to confute a false religion, and to sweep from the face of the world a crying and incurable moral evil : not to construct an universal philosophy of the religious history of man ; for which the time had not then, and perhaps has not yet, arrived. But we have new sources of knowledge, new means of detecting error and guiding inquiry, new points of view open to us : and the more freely and faithfully we use them the more we shall find cause to own, with reverence and thankfulness, the depth, and height, and breadth of the wisdom and goodness of God.

Meantime, it is easy to perceive the polemical advantage which the advocate of Christianity obtained by this unsparing manner of attack. He brought the case straight to issue, not between differently shaded images of a Deity confessedly the same, with their respective champions ready to uphold their several claims amidst the din of contending preferences and of interminable dispute, but, taking his stand on the threshold of the argument, and like a soldier in fight disencumbering himself of all detail, between the God of the Hebrews on the one side, worshipped from the beginning of mankind, and pretended gods on the other, which could render

no distinct account of their origin, and were in truth no gods at all. And, to estimate the greatness of this advantage, we must take into view the nature of the adverse arguments. The Pagan champions did not too much embarrass themselves by defending the popular forms and fables of the old religion. Perhaps, to the credulous villager, the religion of Porphyry might have been as unintelligible or as odious as that of St. Paul. All these incumbrances were at once disposed of by being treated on the Pagan side as allegorical, figurative, secondary manifestations of the true Deity, or even as having been in many cases due to the intrusive and mischievous activity of the spirits of evil. The Pagan champion, then, was himself contending, not for the forms, but for the one great unseen Deity, which, driven to his shifts, he affirmed to lie hid within the forms. To admit, under circumstances like these, that any principle of inward life, under whatever incrustations, was latent in the mythology as it lay before their eyes, would have been to betray the truth. And any seeming approach to that admission, such as allowing that that foul and loathsome corpse had once been alive in youthful health and beauty, might have sorely hindered and perplexed the Christian argument on its way to the general mind.

As respects the religious ideas of the Greeks, properly so called, and their philosophic tenets, the scholars of the seventeenth century seem to have occupied much the same ground with Eusebius and the early Christian writers. But as respected their mythological personages, not having the Pagans to

argue with, they had no prejudices against finding for them a lineage in Scripture. I am not competent to determine how far in the prosecution of their task they went into excess. But those who admit the truth of the Sacred Records, must surely decline to say that they were wrong in principle. We are not called upon to believe that Neptune was Japhet, or that Iphigenia was Jephthah's daughter ; or that Deucalion was Noah, or that Bellerophon was really Joseph in the house of Potiphar, notwithstanding certain resemblances of circumstances by which these and some other such cases are marked. But if we believe in the substantial soundness of the text of Scripture and in the substantial truth of its history, we must then also believe that the Hamitic and Japhetic races, as they in their successive branches set out upon their long migrations, brought with them, from the early home which they had shared with the sons of Shem, the common religious traditions. They could not but go, as Æneas is fabled to have gone from Troy—

“ Cum sociis natoque, Penatibus, ac magnis Dīs.” *

But if there be those who would strangely forbid us to appeal to what may be called, by the most modest of its august titles, the oldest and most venerable document of human history, the argument still remains much the same. The progress of ethnological and philological research still supplies us with accumulating evidence of the chain of migrations, north and westwards, of the Turanian, and especially of the Aryan races, from points necessarily undefined but in close

* Æn. iii. 12.

proximity with the seats of the patriarchal nomads; and has not supplied us with any evidence, or with any presumption whatever, that their known traditions sprang from any fountainhead other than that which is described in the Book of Genesis as the three-branching family of Noah. If, then, upon this ground, there is, to say the least, nothing to exclude or to disparage, but so much to support, the doctrine of the original intercommunion of these races with the Semitic tribes, which could not but include religion, the question recurs in all its force, how was it even possible that they could leave behind them their religious traditions upon the occasion of their first local separation from their parent stock? They did not surely, like the souls in transmigration,* drink of the river of forgetfulness, and raze out from the tablets of the brain, as a preparation for their journey, all they had ever known, or heard, or felt. The obscuration and degeneracy of religious systems is commonly indeed a rapid, but is necessarily a gradual process. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*; and no tribe or nation passes either from light to darkness, or from the possession of a religious belief to the loss of it, at a moment's notice.

It was therefore antecedently probable that, in examining the actual religious systems of later times, and of countries at a distance from the earliest known seat of mankind, but connected with it by the great current of human migration, we should find remaining tokens of affinity to any religious system, which upon

* Plat. de Rep. B. x. p. 621.

competent evidence we might believe to have prevailed among the races most closely and directly connected with that seat. And this antecedent probability is sustained by a mass of evidence running through the whole web of the Hellenic mythology, obscure indeed in its latest and most darkened ages, but continually gaining in force and clearness as we ascend the stream of time, and so strong in itself as to be, I am firmly persuaded, incapable of argumentative confutation.

To collect and present this mass of evidence, with a careful and strict appreciation of the respective value of its parts, is a work not to be attempted within the limits, however extended by your indulgence, of what is termed an Address. But I will now endeavour to bring to a head what has been stated, and to apply it to the purpose which I announced at the commencement.

I submit then to you, that the true *Præparatio Evangelica*, or the rearing and training of mankind for the Gospel, was not confined to that eminent and conspicuous part of it, which is represented by the dispensations given to the Patriarchs and the Jews, but extends likewise to other fields of human history and experience; among which, in modes, and in degrees, varyingly perceptible to us, the Almighty distributed the operations preliminary and introductory to His one great, surpassing, and central design for the recovery and happiness of mankind. So that, in their several spheres, some positive, some negative, some spiritual, some secular, with a partial consciousness, or with an absolute unconsciousness, all were

co-operators in working out His will ; under a guidance strong, and subtle, and the more sublime, perhaps, in proportion as it was the less sensible.

In the body of those traditions of primitive religion which are handed down to us in the Book of Genesis, and which I shall make no further apology for treating as records of great historic weight, there was manifestly included what I may term an humanistic element. It was embodied in the few but pregnant words which declared that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.* The principle of evil was to receive a deadly shock in its vital part, and this at the hands of One who should be born into the very race that He would come to deliver.

The next observation I would submit is this : that there was no provision made, so far as we are aware, at any rate in the Mosaic system, for keeping alive this particular element of the original traditions, otherwise than as an anticipation reaching into the far distant future. On the contrary, every precaution was apparently taken to prevent any human being, or any human form, from becoming the object of a religious reverence. To this aim the abstraction of the body of Moses† from the view of the people seems to be most naturally referred : and the stringent prohibitions of the Second Commandment of the Decalogue appear to have been especially pointed against the execution by human hands of the figure of a man. For we hear in Holy Writ of the serpent‡

* Gen. iii. 15.

† Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6.

‡ Num. xxi. 8, 9 ; John iii. 14.

made by Moses and exhibited to the nation : and the brazen sea of the Temple * rested upon twelve brazen oxen. There were cherubim in the Ark framed by Moses ;† and “ cherubim of image-work ” were made by Solomon for the Temple :‡ but they were not, it is commonly believed, in human figure : and the four living creatures of the vision of Ezekiel had each the mixed character of man, lion, ox, and eagle.§

And it would appear, that these measures were effectual. Ready as were the Jews to worship the serpent or the golden calf, their idolatry never was anthropomorphic. The majesty of the Deity was thus kept, in the belief of the Hebrew race, effectually apart from that one form of lowering association, which, as we see from the experience of Paganism, was by far the subtlest, the most attractive, and the most enchaining. A pure Theistic system was maintained : a redemption to come was embraced in faith : and, in a religion laden with ritual, and charged with symbol, no rite, no symbol, was permitted to exhibit to the senses, and through the senses to the mind, of the people, the form of Him that was to be the worker of the great deliverance. Thus was kept vacant until the appointed time, in the general belief as well as in the scheme or theory of religion, the sublime and solitary place which the Redeemer of the world was to fill. Counterfeits there were, but they had not that dangerous resemblance to the truth, which would enable them to make head against the Messiah when He

* 2 Chron. iv. 2-5.

† Exod. xxv. 17.

‡ 2 Chron. iii. 10.

§ Ezek. i. 5-10.

should arrive. And so, after He had come, His only rivals and competitors in Judæa were conceptions, distorted in the abstract, of His character and office; far different from those solid formations of an embodied and organised religion, whose dangerous contact the Gospel had not to encounter, until the life and work of its author, and the foundation of the Christian society with all its essential powers, were complete.

Let us now turn to the religion of the Hellenic race; and we shall find that, as matter of fact, it appropriated to itself, and was intensely permeated by, that very anthropomorphic* element which the Mosaic system was so especially framed to exclude, and to which the other religions of antiquity gave, in comparison, but a doubtful and secondary place.

If I am asked to point out a link which especially associates the early Greek mythology with the humanistic element of primitive tradition, I venture to name the character of Apollo as pre-eminently supplying such a link. He is born of Zeus, but he is not born of Herè. Through him the divine counsels are revealed to the world as the God of prophecy and of oracle. This lamp of knowledge, burning in him, establishes an affinity between him and the sun; but the anthropomorphic energy of the religion is jealous of the absorption of Deity into mere nature-power. At what period the identification of Apollo with the sun took place in the Hellenic system, we cannot say; but this we know, that it had not taken place in the

* Note V.

time of Homer, with whom Apollo and the Sun are perfectly distinct individuals. To him is assigned the healing art, and the general office of deliverance. To him again, who remains to the last the perfect model of heavenly beauty in the human male form, is assigned by tradition the conquest alike over Death and over the might of the rebellious spirits. In his hands we find numerous functions of such rank and such range, that we cannot understand how they could pass to him from Zeus the supreme deity, until we remember that they are the very functions assigned by a more real and higher system to the Son of God; the true Instructor, Healer, Deliverer, Judge, and Conqueror of Death, in whom the power and majesty of the Godhead were set forth to the world.*

The character of this deity, whom Eusebius calls “the most venerable and the wisest” † of the whole Olympian order, affords, in my opinion, the most complete and varied proof of the traditional relationship to which I now refer. Abundant evidence, however, of the same character, might be adduced under many other heads. But I do not refer to this weighty subject at present with a view of leading you to affirm the existence of such a relationship: that could not legitimately be done, except upon a scrutiny, both deliberate and minute, of a great mass of evidence, gathered from many quarters, and dependent for much of its force upon careful comparison and juxta-position. I now advert to the question only as

* Note VI.

† Præp. Evang. iv. 17.

casting light upon matter which will follow. What I take, however, to be indisputable, apart from all theorising upon causes, is this fact—that the Hellenic mythology is charged throughout with the humanistic element, in a manner clearly and broadly separating it from the other religions of the ancient world. It has anthropomorphism for the soul and centre of all that is distinctive in it; and that peculiar quality seems to enter, more or less, into the religion of other tribes nearly in proportion as they were related to the Hellenic race.

Let us now shortly contemplate that mythology, such as it appears in the works of Homer, its prime and most conspicuous author, and himself the true representative of the purely Hellenic spirit in its largest and most authentic form.

The theology of Homer is variously composed. He seems to have lived at the critical moment in the history of the Hellenic, or, as they were then called, Achaian families or tribes, when the different ethnical elements or factors with which they were to assimilate—Pelasgic, Ionian, Egyptian, Phœnician, and the like—settled down and compounded themselves into the firmly-knit and sharply-defined character of a people, and they were no longer a chaotic assemblage of unassorted or even conflicting units, but as a people were born into that world on whose fortunes they were to exercise an influence almost immeasurable.

The theology of Homer is the Olympian system; and that system exhibits a kind of royal or palace-life

of man,* but on the one hand more splendid and powerful, on the other more intense and free. It is a wonderful and a gorgeous creation. It is eminently in accordance with the signification of that English epithet—rather a favourite apparently with our old writers—the epithet *jovial*,† which is derived from the Latin name of its head. It is a life of all the pleasures of mind and body, of banquet and of revel, of music and of song; a life in which solemn grandeur alternates with jest and gibe; a life of childish wilfulness and fretfulness, combined with serious, manly, and imperial cares; for the Olympus of Homer has at least this one recommendation to esteem,—that it is not peopled with the merely lazy and selfish gods of Epicurus, but its inhabitants busily deliberate on the government of man, and in their debates the cause of justice wins. I do not now, however, discuss the moral titles of the Olympian scheme; what I dwell upon is, its intense humanity, alike in its greatness and its littleness, its glory and its shame.

As the cares and joys of human life, so the structure of society below is reflected, by the wayward wit of man, on heaven above. Though the names and fundamental traditions of the several deities were wholly or in great part imported from abroad, their characters, relations, and attributes passed under a Hellenising process, which gradually marked off for them special provinces and functions, according to laws which appear to have been mainly original and

* Grote's 'History of Greece,' vol. i. pp. 4 seqq. and 462 seqq.

† Note VII.

indigenous, and to have been taken by analogy from the division of labour in political society. As early as in Homer, while the prerogatives of Apollo and Athenè are almost universal, yet the Olympian society has its complement of officers and servants with their proper functions. Hephaistos moulds the twenty golden thrones which move automatically to form the circle of the council of the gods; and builds for each of his brother deities their separate palaces in the deep-folded recesses of the mighty mountain. Music and song are supplied by Apollo and the Muses: Gany-mede and Hebe are the cup-bearers: Hermes and Iris are the messengers: while Themis, in whom is impersonated the idea of deliberation and of relative rights, is the summoner of the *κατακλήσια* * or Great Assembly of the Twentieth Iliad, when the great issue of the war is to be determined. Nothing nearer this on earth has perhaps been bodied forth by the imagination of later poets than the scene, in which Schiller has described the coronation of Rodolph of Hapsburg, with the Electors of the Empire discharging their several offices around him: I quote from the only translation within my reach:—

“ The ancient hall of Aix was bright :
 The coronation-board beside
 Sate king Rodolph’s anointed might,
 In Kaiser’s pomp and pride :
 His meat was served by the Palatine,
 Bohemia poured the sparkling wine ;
 The seven Electors every one
 Stood, fast about the wide-world’s king,
 Each his high function following,
 Like the planets round the sun.”

* Note VIII.

But a still deeper trace of humanitarianism lay in the transportation of the family order into heaven. Only the faintest rudiment of such a system could have been drawn from Semitic sources; but it was carried by the Hellenes to its furthest consequences, and used for the basis of their supernatural structure. The old Pelasgian deities of the country, the importations from Thrace, Phœnicia, Egypt, or elsewhere, and the traditions proper to the Hellenic tribes themselves, were all marshalled and adjusted in a scheme formed according to the domestic relations familiar to us on earth. The Nature-powers of the older worship received the honorary distinction of being made parents and grand or great-grand sires to the ruling dynasty; but, while thus tricked out with barren dignity, they were deprived of all active functions, and relegated into practical insignificance. Still the very arrangements, which are anomalous in the abstract, testify to the strength of that anthropomorphic principle, to which they owed their recognition. For the elder deities were not the more powerful; and parents were supplanted by their sons. Oceanus the sire of the whole family, and Tethys their mother, have for practical purposes no power or place in the Olympian system. They exercise no influence whatever on the life or destinies of man. As the mere representations of certain physical forces, they were ejected from their old supremacy by the more aspiring and truer tendencies of the first Hellenic creed; but that same creed, still copying earth in heaven, found for them a place, as the

decrepit and superannuated members of the system, who had passed from the exercise of sovereignty into retirement, like Laertes * on his rural farm in Ithaca. More or less of the same domestic structure is ascribed without doubt to the theogonies of some other countries ; but our accounts of them may have been influenced by Greek sympathies, and besides I am not aware that in any of them the domestic theory was worked out with the same genial feeling, and almost universal consistency.

In one respect indeed, at the least, there was a conflict of contending sentiments. The early Hellenes seem to have had a peculiar horror of incestuous connection. But the notion of unity of descent among the gods excluded the possibility of arranging them in the family order except by nuptial relationships which, upon earth and for themselves, Greeks would have abhorred. The strong repugnance gave way under the bidding of a necessity yet stronger : their profound sense of the natural order was less disturbed by having Zeus a polygamist, with his sister for his principal wife, than it would have been by abandoning that scheme of propagation from parent to child upon which the whole Olympian hierarchy was arranged. The acknowledgment of what was forbidden on earth as established in heaven represents, in all likelihood, the concessions which were necessary in order to prevent a breach in the framework of the popular creed, and to weld into one system elements that belonged to many.

* Odyss. xxiv., 205 seqq.

The materials for the old religions, outside of Greece and the Greek races, were in great part afforded first by the worship of nature, and secondly by the worship of animals. Both of these the early Hellenic system steadily rejected and eschewed ; and their religion took its stand upon the idea, which inseparably incorporated deity in the matchless human form. This, and much besides, obscured in the later and more mixed traditions, stands out clearly in the earliest records of the Greeks. The ‘Theogony’ of Hesiod, which must be regarded as a work of very great antiquity, exhibits to us the elemental and the Olympian gods in groups clearly enough distinguished. The poems of Hōmer, far more Hellenic in their spirit, may be said to exclude and repel from the sacred precinct alike the heavenly bodies and the elemental powers. The plague in the first Iliad bears evident marks of solar agency : but, without the least allusion to that luminary, it is ascribed to Apollo in one of the noblest anthropomorphic passages of the poems. The Sun* only once appears as a person in the Iliad, when he reluctantly obeys the command of Herè that by setting he shall end the day, which was the last day of Trojan success ; thus indicating the side to which, as an elemental deity, he inclined. Again, Xanthos, a river god, appears in the Theomachy : but he appears on the side of Troy ; and he seems probably to have had one name as a deity with the Trojans,† another with the Greeks or Achaians as a

* Note IX.

† Note X.

stream. When Agamemnon offers solemn sacrifice for his army only, he invokes Zeus alone, and invokes him as dwelling in the sky.* But when he offers the joint sacrifice of the two parties in the Third Book, then he invokes Zeus as governing from the hill of Ida, which was in his view, and invokes with him the Sun, the Earth, and the Rivers.† The Rivers are summoned to the Olympian assembly of the Twentieth Book; but it is an assembly in which the gods are to take their several sides. It is a mistake to suppose that Poseidon was an elemental god: he was the patron of the sea, as he was of the horse, but he was more the god of navigation than of water. The sea had its elemental god, the hoary Nereus, with Amphitrite seemingly for his wife; but Amphitrite is always the moaning Amphitrite, and Nereus never emerges from the depths; nor, though he is frequently referred to, is he ever named on the Hellenic page of Homer.‡ I turn to another head.

Loath on the one side to admit the imposing elements of Nature-worship on the grand scale, the Olympian system is yet more alien to the other favourite form of religious illusion, the worship offered to animals, and particularly to the ox; of which Egypt seems to have been the head-quarters. In the full exhibition, which the poems of Homer afford us, of the religion in its earlier forms, there is not a trace of animal worship. In the *Odyssey*, indeed, an awful and mystic sacredness attaches to the Oxen of the

* Il. ii. 412.

† Il. iii.

‡ Note XI.

Sun. In the island of Thrinakiè, detained by adverse winds, the companions of Odysseus are warned that under no extremity should they supply their wants by the destruction of these animals. Accordingly they resort to birds and fish, unusual food with the Homeric Greeks ; they finally put some of the animals to death, only to avoid dying themselves by famine ; and for this offence the entire crew, except Odysseus, who had not shared in it, are drowned when next they take to sea. Now, although there is no animal worship here, there is what may be called animal sanctity ; but it is in connection with a deity not even recognised at the time in the Hellenic system ; and introduced as it is during the voyage in remote parts, which must have been based upon the tales of Phœnician mariners, it appears certainly to belong to the Phœnician circle of mythology.

And here we find an example of the manner in which the immense plastic power of the Hellenic mind dealt with foreign ideas of all kinds, so as to make them its own. What their sculptors did with the rude and formless art of Egypt, what their philosophers did with the shreds of Eastern knowledge picked up on their travels, their theology did with the many and crude varieties of superstition, which flowed in upon them from the numerous quarters that furnished by sea and land immigrants for the Hellenic peninsula. The old Pelasgian gods, not rudely overthrown, but gently taken from their pedestals, were set down harmless in the shade of a mellow distance ; and the animals, before which lower

types of men were content to bow down the godlike head, were not, when the traditions that deified them set foot on Grecian soil, thrust wholly out of view; but they were put into appropriate and always secondary places. The eagle of Zeus, the falcon of Apollo, the peacock of Herè, the owl of Pallas, stood no higher in Greece than as accessories to the figures on which they attend.

In the scheme of Homer, not all even of these are found. And while in Homer we should look in vain for anything beyond the faintest and most ambiguous trace of a connection between Apollo and the wolf, we find that connection full-blown in the Egyptian mythology, as it is reported by Diodorus, where Horos, his counterpart in the system of that country, is rescued from death by Osiris in the form of that animal; and on the other hand, the later Greek tradition, more deeply charged with foreign elements, abounds with traditions of the wolf,* which in Athens was the protective emblem of the courts of justice. But, even thus far down the stream, the rule seems to hold, that when the figures of the brute creation are allowed to appear in the Hellenic system, they seem to be reduced to subordinate and secondary uses.

Saint Clement, indeed, charges† upon the Greeks certain instances both of nature-worship and of the worship of animals; but in a manner, and with particulars, which show how slight and local were the instances of either. It will not be expected that in

* Müller's 'Dorians,' i. 273, 325. (Tufnell and Lewis's translation.)

† S. Clem. Admonitio ad Gentes, p. 16, B.

an Address of this nature I should attempt those minuter shadings, which general statements like the foregoing must require in order to perfect accuracy. Besides, a common substratum of ideas runs through the mass of the old religions of the world : but we trace the genius of each nation, and it may be the Providential purpose for which that genius was imparted, in its distinctive mode of handling the common stock, here enlarging, there contracting, here elevating, there depressing, so as to produce a distinctive and characteristic result.

And now I will endeavour to point out, in rude and rapid outline, some of the remarkable results of this *idée mère* of the Greek religion, the annexation of manhood to deity, and the reciprocal incorporation of deity into manhood : which made the human form the link between the visible and the invisible worlds, the meeting-point of earth and heaven. And here my object will be only to give you a sample of the redundant materials which seem to rise up around me thickly piled on every side ; most of all, perhaps, in the Homeric or Achaian period.

First I will remark a profound reverence for human life and human nature, which even the fiercest passions of war would but rarely, and only for a moment, violate. Hence we find the highest refinements of feeling which belong to the gentleman, existing at a time, when, among the Greeks, the material appliances of civilisation were in their infancy, and when writing and the alphabet were practically unknown. The sentiment of honour is indicated, at

this epoch, by a word (*αἵματος*) too delicate for our rendering by a single term in the English, perhaps in any modern tongue. A catalogue of horrors that have stained the life of man elsewhere, sometimes even in the midst of the triumphs of culture and refinement, were unknown to the Achaian period. I will dwell for a moment on one of these, the practice of human sacrifice.

You will find* from a charming volume, the *Miscellanies* of Lord Stanhope, that a few years ago, some of the most famous men of our day were brought by him into correspondence on the interesting, but to many startling, question whether human sacrifices were in use among the Romans: not the unlettered semi-barbarians of Romulus or Tarquin, but the Romans of Rome in its highest political power and its palmiest civilisation. Naturally enough, a considerable repugnance was manifested to entertaining this supposition: but as the inquiry proceeded, a younger yet profoundly learned scholar, Sir John Acton, was brought into the field. His full and varied researches do not appear in the pages of Lord Stanhope. But they range well nigh over all space and time. His conclusions are that "we find traces of it, that is of human sacrifice, "throughout almost the whole Hellenic world, in the "*cultus* of almost every god, and in all periods of their "independent history."† That among the Romans it was still more rife: and that, though attempts were

* Stanhope's 'Miscellanies,' p. 112.

† Acton, p. 19.

made to restrain or put down the practice, even the famous edict of Adrian, to which Eusebius allows the honour of its extinction, failed to effect it : nay, more, that “ in every generation of the four centuries, “ from the fall of the Republic to the establishment of “ Christianity, human victims were sacrificed by the “ Emperors ” themselves.

The conclusions of Sir John Acton are not admitted in their full breadth by other great authorities ;* but it seems impossible to doubt the wide-spread and long-continued, or often recurring prevalence of the practice, in contact, more or less, with civilised times and nations, and sustained in various degrees by perverse but accepted ideas of religion.

Notwithstanding this terrible and too well sustained indictment against the unenlightened and the enlightened world, it is pleasing to observe that this horrible rite did not originally belong to the usages of Greece. It seems to have come in by a late contagion from abroad : and human sacrifice is not found in Homer. The slaughter of some Trojan youths by Achilles, in his unsated vengeance, has none of the marks of a religious rite, and no relation to a deity. Of the tradition of Iphigenia, sacrificed in Aulis for the welfare of the Achaian host, Homer is wholly ignorant : and Agamemnon in the *Iliad* speaks of his daughters as open to the option of Achilles, as many fathers may since have done who had two or three of them ready to marry, but so as

* Milman's ‘Hist. of Christ.,’ i. p. 27, 1st edition.

almost to supply sufficient evidence that no such blood-stained gap had been made in the circle of his family. It is many centuries later, when the tradition reaches us in the works of the tragedians. In that grandest of all Greek dramas, the 'Agamemnon' of Æschylus, his murderous wife Clytemnestra seeks an apology for her act partly in the immolation of Iphigenia by her father's hand : and the tone of the play is so condemnatory as to suggest that an Athenian audience, of the middle of the fifth century before Christ, did not allow religion to be an adequate apology for the deed.

At a somewhat later period, the 'Iphigenia in Tauris' of Euripides supplies us with more direct evidence that the practice, while not indigenous in Greece, was foully rife among other races. The scene is laid abroad in barbaric territory : and the chorus of Greek attendants on the doomed Princess, addressing the Deity, says, "Receive, O venerable one, this sacrifice, if it be a sacrifice agreeable to thee, which the law of us Greeks declares to be unholy." Thus showing that the tradition of the foreign origin of the abominable rite, and the original freedom of the Hellenic system from it, was cherished in the memory of the people.

I have already had to observe that the Achaians eschewed both incest and polygamy. I may add that even the unconscious incest of Œdipus and Jocasta drew down the heaviest calamities : and further that we have no trace, among the Homeric records, not only of cannibalism but of violence to nature in any

form, as existing among the Greeks. The crimes of abortion and the exposure of infants, authorised and commended by Plato in his ideal State,* have no place in the Homeric poems : nor do they afford the slightest indication of those shameless lusts, which formed the incredible and indelible disgrace† of Greece in the time of its consummate supremacy in Art, and at the climax of its boasted civilisation.

If I am right in my estimate of the place which the human form held in its relation to the Hellenic religion, we may naturally expect to find it attested, among other ways, by the following signs :—an intense admiration of personal beauty:‡ a resentment against and avoidance of deformity, as a kind of sin against the law of nature : and a marked disposition to associate ignorance with vice.

I cannot now undertake to exhibit the remarkable manner in which these anticipations are realised in Homer : whose appreciation of the beauty of the human form appears from unequivocal signs to exceed that of any author in any age or country : while upon the other side, introducing but one vicious character, Thersites, among the Greeks of the Iliad, he describes his personal appearance with a degree of detail foreign to his habit, in order, seemingly, that, even as we read, we may see him before us in his hideous deformity. The same topics might be illustrated in detail from the later history of Greece, in modes inconsistent or questionable enough, yet

* Plat. de Republ., B. v. § 8 seqq. p. 459.

† Note XII.

‡ Note XIII.

abundantly significant. Courtesans of extraordinary beauty were sometimes chosen to march in the processions of the gods. By the side of the evil tradition of Aphrodite the promiscuous, there lingered long the rival tradition of an Aphrodite the heavenly. On the other hand, with respect to deformity, I do not remember that Aristophanes,* in his campaign against Socrates, makes the use which we might have expected of the ugliness of the philosopher. And though jests were freely passed upon actual eccentricity of feature, I have not seen it proved, in such partial examination of the subject as has lain within my power, that the Greeks were wont to make use of that which we call caricature; which I understand to be, the founding upon some known or peculiar feature a representation of deformity that does not exist, for the purpose of exciting ridicule or hatred. Among the moderns this practice appears to have been employed even to stimulate religious animosity or fury:† and the rarity or absence of it, among a people possessed of such high sarcastic power as the Greeks, suggests that it may have been excluded by the predominating force of a traditional reverence, grown into instinct, for the beauty of the human form; having its origin nowhere with greater likelihood than in the early and continued association of that form with the highest objects of religion.

I will now refer to the feeling especially of the Homeric period concerning the sacredness of the human

Note XIV.

† Lecky's 'Rise and Influence of Rationalism,' vol. ii. p. 125, &c.

body against both violation and exposure. The horror of Priam in anticipating his own death at the coming sack of Troy rises to its climax, when he brings into the picture the tearing and defilement by dogs of his own exposed and naked figure.* And the extremest point of punishment threatened to the degraded Thersites appears to be the stripping of his person for the disgust and derision of the camp, and the seaming it with “indecorous” wounds.† Nor was this respect for decency a shallow or shortlived tradition. It was indeed rudely tried; since it came into conflict with the eagerness of the race for high physical activity and athletic development, stimulated to the uttermost by the great national institution of the Games, in which, as Horace said with little exaggeration, the palm of the victor uplifted even the lords of earth to the honours of the gods. Yet, important as it was for perfection in those unparalleled contests, to free the person from the restraints of clothing, Thucydides‡ in his Preface tells us that the athletes were formerly covered: that the Lacedæmonians were the first to strip in the arena, and that it was not many years before his time when the fashion reached its height.

But when we are seeking to ascertain the measure of that conception which any given race has formed of our nature, there is perhaps no single test so

* Il. xxii. 66-76.

† Il. ii. 261-64; *ἀεικέσσι πληγῆσιν*. To appreciate the force of the remark, the passages should be consulted in the original.

‡ Thucyd. i. c. 6. See Aristoph. *Νεφ.* 972 seqq., on the garb of youths when with their master of gymnastics.

effective as the position which it assigns to woman. For as the law of force is the law of the brute creation, so, in proportion as he is under the yoke of that law, does man approximate to the brute: and in proportion, on the other hand, as he has escaped from its dominion, is he ascending into the higher sphere of being, and claiming relationship with deity. But the emancipation and due ascendancy of woman are not a mere fact: they are the emphatic assertion of a principle: and that principle is the dethronement of the law of force, and the enthronement of other and higher laws in its place, and in its despite.

Outside the pale of Christianity, it would be difficult to find a parallel, in point of elevation, to the Greek woman of the heroic age. Mr. Buckle* candidly acknowledges that her position was then much higher than it had come to be in the most civilised historic period of Greece; and yet he was a writer whose bias, and the general cast of whose opinions, would have disposed him to an opposite conclusion. Again: if the pictures presented by the historical books of the Old Testament and by Homer respectively be compared, candour will claim from us a verdict in favour of the position of the Greek as compared with that of the Hebrew woman. Among the Jews polygamy was permitted; to the Greeks, as has been said, it was unknown. Tales like that of Amnon and Tamar,† or like that of the Levite and his concubine,‡ are not found even among the deeds of the

* Buckle's "Lecture on Woman," in 'Fraser's Magazine,' vol. lvii. pp. 395-6.

† Judges xix.

‡ 2 Sam. xiii.

dissolute Suitors of the Odyssey. Among the Jews the testimony of our Lord is that because of the hardness of their hearts Moses suffered them to put away their wives : but that “from the beginning it was not so.”* Apart from the violent contingencies of war, manners seem to have been, in the momentous point of divorce, not very different among the Greeks of the heroic age, from what they had been in “the beginning.” The picture of Penelope waiting for her husband through the creeping course of twenty years, and of Odysseus yearning in like manner for his wife, is one of the most remarkable in the whole history of human manners ; and it would lose little, if anything, of its deeper significance and force, even if we believed that the persons, whom the poet names Odysseus and Penelope, have never lived. It must be observed, too, what, in the mind of Homer, constitutes the extraordinary virtue of the royal matron. It is not the refusal to marry another while her husband is alive, but her stubborn determination not to accept the apparently certain conclusion that he must have ceased to live. Not even the Suitors suggest that, if he be indeed alive, any power can set her free.

Scarcely less noteworthy, for the purpose of the present argument, are the immunities which she enjoys even in her painful position. She is importuned, but she is not insulted. She feels horror and aversion, but she has no cause for fear. Such, in the

* St. Matt. xix. 8.

morning of Greek life, was the reverence that hedged a woman, as she sat alone and undefended in the midst of a body of powerful and abandoned men.

Again: the famous scene of Hector and Andromache* is not more touching by its immeasurable tenderness, than it is important for the proof which it affords, with reference to the contemporary manners, of what may be called the moral equality of man and wife. And the general effect of the poems is, to give an idea of a social parity, and of a share borne by women in the practical and responsible duties of life, such as we seek in vain, notwithstanding some charming specimens of character, among the Jews. Still less can it be found among the Greeks of the more polished ages. In their annals, we scarce ever hear of a wife or mother, though the names of mistresses and courtesans are entered on the roll of fame, and Phryne† dedicated in a Phocian temple a gilded statue of herself, which was wrought by the hand of Praxiteles. Indeed, not to speak of the poetry of Euripides, even the most solid and impartial judgments, such as those of Thucydides and Aristotle, were unfavourably warped in their estimate of women.

It would, I have no doubt, be possible to illustrate in great detail from ancient records the high value set by the Greeks upon man, in his mind, life, and person. I will mention two instances from Pausanias. An Arcadian, named Skedasos, living at

* Il. vi. 390 seqq.

† Pausanias, x. c. 14, sub fin.

Leuctra, had two daughters, who were violated by Lacedæmonian youths. Unable to bear the shame, they put an end to their lives. Their father, also, having in vain sought justice from the Spartan authorities, sternly recoiled from the disgrace, and destroyed himself. In after times Epaminondas, about to join battle with the Spartans at the place, made offerings and prayers to the insulted maidens and to their parent; and then won the victory which laid low the power of Sparta.

The other is of a different, and a yet more singular, character. The statue of Theagenes, the Thasian athlete,* after his death, fell upon an enemy of his, and killed him. The sons of the man, who thus lost his life, brought an action against the statue; and it was thrown into the sea, under a law of Draco, which made inanimate objects punishable for destroying human existence. Nor was this law peculiar to Athens, where it was maintained in the legislation of Solon. For, as we see, it was recognised in Thasos. Now there is an apparent resemblance between this law and the English law of deodand, which involved the forfeiture, says Blackstone,† of “whatever personal chattel is the immediate cause of the death of any reasonable creature.” But I think that, with much seeming similarity, the cases are essentially different. Deodand was originally a payment to the Sovereign to be applied to pious uses, and seems to have passed into a manorial right, or, in the

* Pausanias, vi. 11, 12.

† Blackstone's Commentaries, i. 8, 16.

Germanic codes,* into a compensation for homicide, payable to the surviving relatives. But it proceeded upon the principle of making owners pay; though they paid in respect of homicide effected through a material instrument. The Greek law inflicted punishment upon the inanimate matter itself, for having violated the sanctity of human life. In this essential point it exactly corresponded with the remarkable law of Moses, which said, "If an ox gore a man that he die, the ox shall be stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten."† But even this provision falls greatly short of the full spirit of the Greek law, since even the animal that kills is conscious, and gores from excited passion.

I pass, however, to a subject of larger scope, and I venture to suggest that the anthropomorphic spirit of the Greek religion was the source of that excellence in art, which has become to after ages a model for imitation, and a tribunal without appeal.

All are aware that the Greek religion was eminently poetical; for it fulfilled in the most striking manner that condition which poetry above all requires, harmony in the relation between the worlds of soul and sense. Every river, fountain, grove, and hill, was associated with the heart and imagination of the Greek; subject, however, always to the condition that they should appear as ruled by a presiding spirit, and that that spirit should be impersonated in the human shape. A poetical religion must, it seems, be favourable to art. The beauty of form which so much

* Grote's 'History of Greece,' ii. 10, and iii. 104.

† Exodus xxi. 28.

abounded in the country was also favourable to art. The Athenians, however, are stated not to have been beautiful ; and at Sparta, where art was neglected, beauty was immensely prized. And, indeed, the personal beauty of a race is by no means usually found sufficient to produce the development of the fine arts : and as to the poetry of religion, and its bearing upon art, while a general connection may be admitted, it is very difficult to define the manner and degree. The practice of image-worship promotes the production of works, first rude and coarse, then more or less vulgar and tawdry. Over the whole continent of Europe there is scarcely at this moment an object of popular veneration, which is worthy to be called a work of art. Of the finest remaining works of Greek art, not very many, I imagine, bear the mark of having been intended for worship. The great size required for statues like the Athenè of the Parthenon and the Zeus of Olympia, seems unfavourable to the exhibition of fine art in the highest sense.* In Pausanias we find notices of an immense number of statues in and about the temples : they are not commonly, I think, praised for excellence in this respect ; and the mixture of materials, to which we find constant reference, could hardly have been chosen by the artist for the sake of his own proper purpose. I have heard Lord Macaulay give his opinion that this mixture in the Zeus of Phidias at Olympia, made of ivory and gold, simple as was that form of combination, may probably have

* Note XV.

been due to the necessity of condescension to the popular taste in connection with an object of worship. Although, therefore, the highest artists were employed, it does not appear probable that they derived any part of their higher inspiration from the fervour or the multitude of the worshippers in the temples. Neither will it avail to urge the great esteem in which the professors of the arts were held. High indeed it was; and the successions of sculptors in the different schools* seem to have been recorded apparently with almost as much care as the Archons of Athens, or the Priestesses of Herè at Argos, those landmarks of the history of States. But the question recurs, was their estimation the cause of their excellence, or was their excellence the cause of their estimation; and if the estimation flowed from the excellence, whence came the excellence itself? Both the one and the other were perhaps due to another cause.

That many accessories contributed to the wonderful result I do not doubt. But mainly and essentially, every art and method, every device and habit, in the language of Aristotle, has an end; and is modelled upon the end at which it aims; and by that end its greatness or its littleness is measured. Now the climax of all art, it seems to be agreed, is the rendering of the human form. What, then, could be so calculated to raise this representation to the acmè of its excellence, as the belief that the human form was not only the tabernacle, but the original and proper

* Pausanias, in divers passages.

shape, the inseparable attribute, of Deity itself? In the quaint language of George Herbert,

“He that aims the moon
Shoots higher much, than he that means a tree.”

And again as Tennyson has sung :

“It was my duty to have loved the highest :
We needs must love the highest when we see it,
Not Lancelot, nor another.” *

It was this perpetual presentation of the highest to the mind of the Greek artist, that cheered him, and rewarded him, and yet, while it cheered him and rewarded him, still ever spurred him on in his pursuit. Whatever he had done, more remained to do,

“Nil actum reputans dum quid superesset agendum.”

The desire of ambition was fulfilled : he had always more worlds to conquer. The divine was made familiar to him, by correspondence of shape : but on the other side, its elements, which it was his business to draw forth and indicate to men, reached far away into the infinite. And I know not what true definition there is for any age or people of the highest excellence in any kind, unless it be perpetual effort upwards in pursuit of an object higher than ourselves, higher than our works, higher even than our hopes, yet beckoning us on from hour to hour, and always permitting us to apprehend in part.

I venture then to propound for consideration the opinion, that the fundamental cause of the transcendent excellence of the Greek artist lay in his being, by his birth and the tradition of his people, as well

* Idylls of the King : Guinevere.

as with every favouring accessory, both in idea and in form, and in such a sense as no other artist was, a worker upon deity, conceived as residing in the human form.

It is hardly necessary to observe how the rich and many-sided composition of the Greek mythology favoured the artist in his work, by answering to the many-sided development of the mind and life of man.

Unconsciously then to himself, and in a sphere of almost parochial narrowness, the Greek not only earned himself an immortal fame, but was equipping from age to age a great School of Art, to furnish principles and models made ready to the hand of that purer and higher civilisation which was to be; and over the preparation of which, all the while, Divine Providence was brooding, like the Spirit on the face of the waters, till the fulness of time should come.

But besides the Art and the Poetry of the Greeks, there were other provinces in which their achievements were no less remarkable; and, with reference to the present argument, I must shortly touch upon their philosophy.

The first philosophers of the Greek race were not for the most part natives and inhabitants of Greece, nor subject exclusively to Greek influences. Their speculations turned mainly on the nature of the first principle, and partook of an eastern spirit. But when philosophy took up her abode in the country where Hellenism was supreme and without a rival, that human element, which lay so profoundly em-

bedded in the whole constitution of the Hellenic mind, unfolded itself in the region of speculative thought; and the true meaning of the famous saying that Socrates called down philosophy from Heaven would seem to be, that he gave expression to the genius of his country by propounding, as the prime subject for the study of man, the nature, constitution, and destiny of man himself. And the illustrious series of disciples, some of them probably greater than their master, who followed his example, were not therein aping or adopting the mere peculiarity of an individual, but obeying a congenial impulse that sprang from the depths of their being. Whatever philosophy was to be indigenous in Greece could not but be predominantly and profoundly human; and their power and fame, as analysts of our unfathomable constitution, are fresh and unabated at the present hour. Fashion may wave her wand, but it is with small result. Idolatrous veneration of course has at times begotten temporary reaction and neglect; but the power of Greek culture seems again and again to assert itself by virtue of the law which makes all things find their level, and since it came into existence it has never ceased to be in the most instructed periods the chief criterion and means of the highest intellectual training: not, of course, necessarily for each individual, but for classes and for countries.

The point, however, to which I wish to draw particular attention at this moment, is the large and

well-balanced view, to which Greek Philosophy attained, of the compound nature of man.

Never, probably, has there appeared upon the stage of the world so remarkable an union, as in the Greeks, of corporal with mental excellence. From the beginning of the race, Homer shared the privilege of his most gorgeous epithet* between battle and debate. The Odes of such a poet as Pindar, handing onwards the tradition of the Twenty-third Iliad, commemorate, so to speak, the marriage of athletic exercise with the gift of Song. We do not trace among the Greeks that contrast, which is found so rude and sharp elsewhere, between energy in the body and energy in the brain. The Greek was in this respect like Adam in the noble verse of Milton,

“ For contemplation he and valour form’d.”

And the Greek philosophy was for nothing more remarkable than the manner in which it not only asserted but felt, as an elementary law, the place of the Body in human education.

This was with no exclusive or peculiar view to what we should call utilitarian purposes, such as those of defence or industry, or even art. It seems to have been rather an ample recognition of the right of the body to be cared for, and to be reared in its various organs up to the highest excellence it is capable of attaining, as being, what indeed it is, not

* *κυδίανευρα*. Il. i. 490 ; iv. 225, *et alibi*.

a mere vesture, or tool, or appendage of the soul, but, like the soul, an integral part of man himself.

This plenitude and accuracy of view on such a subject is the more to be regarded on some special grounds. In general, the philosophies of the world, outside of Christianity, have shown a tendency to fluctuate between sensuality on the one hand, and on the other a contempt and hatred of matter, and a disposition to identify it with the principle of evil. The philosophy of Socrates, of Plato, and of Aristotle, seems to have steered clear and safe between this Scylla and this Charybdis. But again, the Greek saw, as all men see, the body parted from the soul at death, and hastening rapidly, as by the law of its nature, to corruption. To none could this severance, and its mournful and painful incidents, be more repulsive than to him, with his delicate perceptions and his lively emotions. Of a future existence in any shape he usually knew or even surmised little; of the revival of the body, or of the reunion hereafter of the two great factors of the human being, he had yet less conception. We may say then that he lay under every temptation to a disparaging view of the body and of its office. Yet, in spite of his immense disadvantage, it fell to him to find a place for the body in the philosophy of human nature, and to incorporate the principle thus conceived in laws, usages, and institutions, with a clearness and general justness of view, by which Christian learning has done and will yet do well to profit. What with us is somewhat dubious and fluctuating both in theory and in practice, with

him was familiar and elementary in both; and the teachers of mental accomplishment taught also the science, if not the art, of bodily excellence.

Thus for example Plato, in his Treatise on the State, has to consider what men are fit to be chosen for rulers. They should if possible, he says, have the advantage of personal beauty. They must be energetic: and he therefore proceeds to treat of the character of the *φιλόπρονος*,* or diligent man. He must be ready and keen in study: for human souls are much more cowardly in strong studies than in exercises of corporal strength: as in the former they bear all the burden, instead of sharing it with the body. But philosophy itself, he admits, has fallen into some dishonour, from a tendency to partiality in handling this question. The truly diligent man, then, must not be halt or one-sided in his diligence. If he be fond of athletic exercise and of sports, but not apt for learning and inquiry, then he is but half-diligent. And no less "lame" will he be, says the philosopher, if, addicted to mental pursuits, he neglects the training of the body, and of the organs with which it is endowed. This may serve for a sample, but it is a sample only, of the large and complete grasp of the Greek philosophy upon the nature of man: and I connect this largeness and completeness with the fact that the Greek, from the nature of his religion, cherished in a special degree the idea of the near association of human existence, in soul and body,

* Plat. de Rep. B. vii. p. 535.

with that existence which we necessarily regard as the largest and most complete, namely with the Divine.

It may indeed be said, that the Greek lowered and contaminated the Divine idea by weak and by vile elements carried into it from the human. Yes : this and much more may be said, and said with truth. Nothing can be more humbling or more instructive, than the total failure of the Greek mind with all its powers either to attain or even to make progress towards attaining the greater ends of creation by rendering man either good or happy. This is the negative but most important purpose, which the Greek of old may have been destined to fulfil; the purpose of casting down the strongholds of our pride, by first showing us how great he is, and then leaving us to see how little, when standing alone, is all his greatness, if it be measured with reference to its results in accomplishing those ends of life, without which every other end is vain. But I am not now engaged in endeavouring to ascertain what Greek life or what the Greek mind was in itself, and for itself; nor for what negative or secondary uses the study of it may be available. I wish to point out in some degree what it was for a purpose beyond itself, what materials it was preparing for our use, how it was, if I may so express myself, the secular counterpart of the Gospel; and how it became, in one word, the great intellectual factor of the Christian civilisation.

Now it is not I think difficult to see that materials and instruments, such as it furnished, were required.

I will not attempt by argument to show, that all the powers and capacities of man, being the work of God, must have their proper place in His designs ; and that the evil in the world arises not from their use but from their misuse, not from their active working each according to its place in the Providential order, but from their having gone astray, as the planets would if the centripetal force, that controls their action, were withdrawn.

We see then in the Greeks, beyond all question, these two things : first, a peculiar and powerful element of anthropomorphism pervading their religion, and giving it its distinctive character : secondly, a remarkable fulness, largeness, subtlety, elevation, and precision in their conception of human nature ; taking form in, or at least accompanying, an immense vigour both of speculation and of action ; a language of marvellous reach, elasticity, variety, and power ; a scientific excellence in art never elsewhere attained ; and an eminence in the various branches of letters which has given to them, for more than two thousand years, the place of first authority in the cultivated world. The Latin literature, though it has both a character and a purpose of its own, is, in its most splendid elements, derivative from the Greek.

Now, if we survey with care and candour the present wealth of the world—I mean its wealth intellectual, moral, and spiritual—we find that Christianity has not only contributed to the patrimony of man its brightest and most precious jewels, but has likewise been what our Saviour pronounced it, the salt or

preserving principle of all the residue, and has maintained its health, so far as it has been maintained at all, against corrupting agencies. But, the salt is one thing, the thing salted is another : and, as in the world of nature, so in the world of mind and of human action, there is much that is outside of Christianity, that harmonises with it, that revolves, so to speak, around it, but that did not and could not grow out of it. It seems to have been for the filling up of this outline, for the occupation of this broad sphere of exertion and enjoyment, that the Greeks were, in the counsels of Providence, ordained to labour : that so the Gospel, produced in the fulness of time, after the world's long gestation, might have its accomplished work in rearing mankind up to his perfection, first in the spiritual life, but also, and through that spiritual life, in every form of excellence, for which his varied powers and capacities have been created.

If this be so, it is quite plain that the Greeks have their place in the Providential order, ay, and in the Evangelical Preparation, as truly and really as the children of Abraham themselves.

But indeed there is no need, in order to a due appreciation of our debt to the ancient Greeks, that we should either forget or disparage the function which was assigned by the Almighty Father to His most favoured people. Much profit, says St. Paul, had the Jew in every way. He had the oracles of God : he had the custody of the promises : he was the steward of the great and fundamental conception of the unity of God, the sole and absolute condition under

which the Divine idea could be upheld among men at its just elevation. No poetry, no philosophy, no art of Greece, ever embraced, in its most soaring and widest conceptions, that simple law of love towards God and towards our neighbour, on which “two commandments hang all the law and the prophets,” and which supplied the moral basis of the new dispensation. There is one history, and that the most touching and most profound of all, for which we should search in vain through all the pages of the classics,—I mean the history of the human soul in its relations with its Maker; the history of its sin, and grief, and death, and of the way of its recovery to hope and life, and to enduring joy. For the exercises of strength and skill, for the achievements and for the enchantments of wit, of eloquence, of art, of genius, for the imperial games of politics and war, let us seek them on the shores of Greece. But if the first among the problems of life be how to establish the peace and restore the balance of our inward being; if the highest of all conditions in the existence of the creature be his aspect towards the God to whom he owes his being, and in whose great hand he stands; then let us make our search elsewhere. All the wonders of the Greek civilisation heaped together are less wonderful than is the single Book of Psalms. Palestine was weak and despised, always obscure, oftentimes and long trodden down beneath the feet of imperious masters. Greece for a thousand years,

“Confident from foreign purposes,” *

* King John, ii. 1.

repelled every invader from her shores, and, fostering her strength in the keen air of freedom, she defied, and at length overthrew, the mightiest of empires; and when finally she felt the resistless grasp of the masters of all the world, them too, at the very moment of her subjugation, she herself subdued to her literature, language, arts, and manners.* Palestine, in a word, had no share of the glories of our race; they blaze on every page of the history of Greece with an overpowering splendour. Greece had valour, policy, renown, genius, wisdom, wit,—she had all, in a word, that this world could give her; but the flowers of Paradise, which blossom at the best but thinly, blossomed in Palestine alone.

And yet, as the lower parts of our bodily organization are not less material than the higher to the safety and well-being of the whole, so Christianity itself was not ordained to a solitary existence in man, but to find helps meet for itself in the legitimate use of every faculty, and in the gradually accumulated treasures of the genius, sagacity, and industry of the human family.

Besides the loftiest part of the work of Providence entrusted to the Hebrew race, there was other work to do, and it was done elsewhere. It was requisite to make ready the materials not only of a divine renewal and of a moral harmony for the world, but also for a thorough and searching culture of every power and gift of man, in all his relations to the

* Note XVI.

world and to his kind ; so as to lift up his universal nature to the level upon which his relation as a creature to his Creator, and as a child to his Father, was about to be established.

And the question arises whether, among the auxiliaries required to complete the training process for our race, there were not to be found some which were of a quality, I will not say to act as a corrective to Christianity, but to act as a corrective to the narrow views and the excesses which might follow upon certain modes of conceiving and of applying it. Doubtless the just idea of their general purpose is that they were a collection of implements and materials to assist in the cultivation of the entire nature of man, and to consecrate all his being to the glory and the designs of his Maker. Yet in part they might have a purpose more special still,—the purpose of assigning due bounds to the action of impulses springing out of Christianity itself.

Now, that narrow conception, which I have mentioned, of the Jews as virtually the sole object of the Providential designs of God, while it began doubtless in a devout sentiment, passed into superstition when it led men to assign to the Jewish people every imaginable gift and accomplishment, and into virtual impiety when it came to imply that the Almighty had little care for the residue of His creatures. And certainly it was not to Scripture itself that opinions like these were due. In a Dissertation ‘On the Prophecies of the Messiah dispersed among the Heathen,’ Bishop Horsley has shown what a large amount of

testimony is yielded by the Sacred Books to the remaining knowledge of the true God among the races in the neighbourhood of Judea. With them religion seems to have been for long periods, as was also to no small extent the religious practice of the Jews, an inconsistent combination of lingering and struggling truth with rampant error. Melchisedec, the type of Christ, Job, one of the chosen patrons of faith and patience, were of blood foreign to the patriarchal race; and the same agency of the prophetic order, which was employed to correct and guide the Jew, was not withheld from his neighbours: Balaam, among the Moabites, was a prophet inspired by the Most High. Of the minor prophetic books of the Old Testament two are expressly devoted to setting forth the burden of Nineveh and the dealings of God with its inhabitants: and Eastern Magi were, in the words of Bishop Horsley, “the first worshippers of Mary’s Holy Child.” *

A system of religion, however absolutely perfect for its purpose, however divine in its conception and expression, yet of necessity becomes human too, from the first moment of its contact with humanity; from the very time, that is to say, when it begins to do its proper work by laying hold upon the hearts and minds of men, mingling, as the leaven in the dough, with all that they contain, and unfolding and applying itself in the life and conduct of the individual, and in the laws, institutions, and usages of society.

* ‘Dissertation,’ &c., p. 117.

In the building up of the human temple, the several portions of the work, while sustaining and strengthening each other, confine each other also, like the stones of a wall, to their proper place and office in the fabric.

Divine truth contained in the Gospel, is addressed to the wants and uses of a nature not simple but manifold, and is manifold itself: though dependent upon one principle it consists of many parts, and in order to preserve reciprocally the due place and balance of those parts, means that we call human are available, as well as means more obviously divine; and secular forms and social influences, all adjusted by one and the same Governor of the world, are made to serve the purposes that have their highest expression in the Kingdom of Grace. The Gospel aims not at destroying this equilibrium, but at restoring it: and in the restoration it accepts, nay courts, and by natural law requires, the aid of secondary means.

It is manifest indeed that there was in Christianity that which man might easily and innocently carry into such an excess, as, though it would have ceased to be Christian, would not have ceased to seem so, and would under a sacred title have tended to impair the healthful and complete development of his being.

Rousseau* objects to the Christian system that it is opposed to social good order and prosperity, because it teaches a man to regard himself as a citizen of another world, and thus diverts him from

* Rousseau, 'Contrat Social,' b. iv. c. viii.

the performance of his duties as a member of civil society. "Far from attaching the hearts of the citizens to the state, it detaches them from it, as from all other earthly things. I know nothing more opposed to the social spirit. . . . A society of true Christians would no longer be a society of men What matters it to be free or slave in this vale of misery? The one thing needful is to go to Paradise, and submission to calamity is an additional means of getting there."

In an age and in a country such as this, it is not required, it is scarcely allowable, to seem to depreciate those various forms of self-restraint and self-conquest which the spirit of man, vexed in its sore conflict with the flesh and with the world, has in other times employed to establish the supremacy of the soul, by trampling upon sense and appetite and all corporal existence. Even in the time of the Apostles, it seems to have been manifest that a tendency to excess in this direction had begun to operate in the Christian Church. As time passed on, and as the spirit of the unrenewed world became more rampant within the sacred precinct, the reaction against it likewise grew more vehement and eager. The deserts of Egypt were peopled with thousands upon thousands of anchorites;* who forswore every human relation, extinguished every appetite, and absorbed every motive, every idea, every movement of our complex nature in the great but single function of the relation to the unseen world.† True and earnest in their

* Note XVII.

† Note XVIII.

Christian warfare, they notwithstanding represent a spirit of exaggeration, which it was requisite to check, uprooting what they ought rather to have pruned, and destroying what they ought to have chastised, and mastered, and converted to purposes of good. That internecine war with sin, which is of the very essence of Christianity, seems to have been understood by them as a war against the whole visible and sensible world, against the intellectual life, against a great portion of their own normal nature : and though as regarded themselves, even their exaggeration was pardonable and in many respects a noble error, yet its unrestricted sway and extension would have left man a maimed, a stunted, a distorted creature. And it would have done more than this. By severing the Gospel from all else that is beautiful and glorious in creation, it would have exposed the spiritual teacher to a resistance not only vehement but just, and would have placed the kingdom of grace in permanent and hopeless discord with the kingdoms of nature, reason, truth, and beauty, kingdoms established by the very same Almighty Hand.

Those principles of repression, which were indispensable as the medicine of man, were unfit for his food. What was requisite, however, was not to expel them, and thereby to revert to the mental riot and the moral uncleanness of heathenism, but to check their usurpations, and to keep them within their bounds ; and this was to be effected not by prohibition or disparagement, but by vindicating for every part, and power, and work, of human nature, and for

every office of life, its proper place in the Divine order and constitution of the world. The seed of this comprehensive philosophy was supplied by the words of the Apostle : " Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report : if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." * And so the solid and fruitful materials of the Greek civilisation came in aid, by a wise Providence, of the humanising principles and precepts of the Gospel, to assist in securing a well-balanced development of the powers of the Christian system, and to prevent the instruments designed for eradicating the seeds of disease from subverting the yet higher agencies appointed for the fostering and development of life in every region of our being and our activity.

Volumes might be written with profit to trace the application of the principles touched upon in this Address to the whole history of the Church, and of the Christian civilisation, down to the present day ; and the more we said, the more there would remain to say. That which I have now attempted is no more, in effect, than a suggestion, which may open the way for others into a wide and ever-widening field. And if that suggestion be just it will be difficult to deny its importance. Let us glance in a few concluding words at some of its results.

First, it places on high and safe grounds that genial

* Phil. iv. 8.

primacy of the Greeks in letters and in human culture, to the acknowledgment of which Christian Europe has been guided not so much by a logical process, or a definite forethought, as by a sure instinct with the after confirmation of a long experience. Nor can this primacy be justly disturbed by the multiplication, and the energetic and growing pursuit, of those branches of knowledge for which this age has been so remarkable. For Aristotle it was excusable to regard the heavenly bodies as objects nobler than man. But Christianity has sealed and stamped the title of our race as the crown and flower of the visible creation : and with this irreversible sentence in their favour, the studies, well called studies of humanity, should not resent nor fear, but should favour and encourage all other noble research having for its object the globe on which we live, the tribes with which it is peopled in land, air, and sea, the powers drawn forth from nature or yet latent in her unexplored recesses, or the spaces of that vast system—

“ Ultra flammantia mœnia mundi,”

to which our earth belongs.

But more than this : we live in times when the whole nature of our relation to the unseen world is widely, eagerly, and assiduously questioned. Sometimes we are told of general laws, so conceived as to be practically independent either of a Lawgiver or a Judge. Sometimes of a necessity working all things to uniform results, but seeming to crush and to bury under them the ruins of our will, our freedom, our

personal responsibility. Sometimes of a private judgment, which we are to hold upon the hard condition of taking nothing upon trust, of passing by, at the outset of our mental life, the whole preceding education of the world, of owning no debt to those who have gone before without a regular process of proof, in a word of beginning anew each man for himself: a privilege which I had thought was restricted to the lower orders of creation, where the parent infuses no prejudices into its litter or its fry. Such are the fancies which go abroad. Such are the clouds which career in heaven, and pass between us and the sun, and make men idly think, that what they see not, is not, and blot the prospects of what is in so many and such true respects a happy and a hopeful age. It is I think an observation of Saint Augustine, that those periods are critical and formidable, when the power of putting questions runs greatly in advance of the pains to answer them. Such appears to be, in regard to the province of the unseen, the period in which we live. And all among us, who are called in any manner to move in the world of thought, may well ask, who is sufficient for these things? Who can with just and firm hand sever the transitory from the durable, and the accidental from the essential, in old opinions? Who can combine, in the measures which reason would prescribe, reverence and gratitude to the past with a sense of the new claims, new means, new duties of the present? Who can be stout and earnest to do battle for the Truth, and yet hold sacred, as he

ought, the freedom of inquiry, and cherish, as he ought, a chivalry of controversy like the ancient chivalry of arms? One persuasion at least let us embrace : one error let us avoid. Let us embrace this persuasion, that Christianity will by her inherent resources find for herself a philosophy equal to all the shifting and all the growing wants of the time. Let us avoid the error of seeking to cherish a Christianity of isolation. The Christianity which is now and hereafter to flourish, and, through its power in the inner circles of human thought, to influence ultimately, in some manner more adequate than now, the masses of mankind, must be such as of old the Wisdom of God was described.

“ For in her is an understanding spirit, holy, one
 “ only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain,
 “ not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good,
 “ quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good,
 “ kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having
 “ all power, overseeing all things. . . .

“ For she is the brightness of the everlasting light,
 “ the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the
 “ image of His goodness.” *

It must be filled full with human and genial warmth, in close sympathy with every true instinct and need of man, regardful of the just titles of every faculty of his nature, apt to associate with and make its own all, under whatever name, which goes to enrich and enlarge the patrimony of the race. And

* ‘ Wisdom of Solomon,’ viii. 22, 23, 26.

therefore it is well that we should look out over the field of history, and see if haply its records, the more they are unfolded, do or do not yield us new materials for the support of faith. Some at least among us experience has convinced that, just as fresh wonder and confirmed conviction flow from examining the structure of the universe, and its countless inhabitants, and their respective adaptations to the purposes of their being and to the use of man, the same results will flow in yet larger measure from tracing the footmarks of the Most High in the seemingly bewildered paths of human history. Everywhere, before us, and behind us, and around us, and above us and beneath, we shall find the Power which—

“Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.” *

And, together with the Power, we shall find the Goodness and the Wisdom, of which that sublime Power is but a minister. Nor can that wisdom and that goodness anywhere shine forth with purer splendour, than when the Divine forethought, working from afar, in many places, and through many generations, so adjusts beforehand the acts and the affairs of men, as to let them all converge upon a single point, upon that redemption of the world, by God made Man, in which all the rays of His glory are concentrated, and from which they pour forth a flood of healing light even over the darkest and saddest places of creation.

* Pope's 'Essay on Man,' iv.

Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Professors, and Gentlemen, I commend to your notice and your impartial research the subject of the foregoing remarks. It is at least a less unworthy offering than the mere commonplaces of taking leave. Yet I claim one remaining moment to convey to you my gratitude for your confidence, to assure you that I shall ever feel a lively interest in all that pertains to the welfare of your famous University, and to bid you respectfully farewell.

NOTES.

NOTE I., p. 12.

This appropriating power of the Greeks is well expressed in a passage quoted by Eusebins from Diodorus, who is describing the view taken of that power by the Egyptians (Præp. Evang. ii. 6) καθόλου δέ φασι τοὺς Ἑλληνας ἐξειδιάζεσθαι τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους Ἀιγυπτίων ἡρωάς τε καὶ θεούς.

NOTE II., p. 12.

These sentiments are not only contained in particular passages of the 'Præparatio,' but run through the whole work. See for instance :

On the foreign origin of the Greek religion, B. i. 6, i. 10, ii. 1, and ii. 3. The Hellenic μυθολογίαι κάτωθεν ὁρμῶνται, iii. 4.

On the composition of the old religions, v. 3.

On the commendation of the Greek genius and the philosophers, i. 6 (τά σεμνὰ τῆς γενναίας Ἑλληνῶν φιλοσοφίας), i. 8, i. 10, xi. 1, and ii. 6 (ὁ θαυμάσιος Πλάτων . . . ὁ πάντων ἄριστος), v. 33.

On the light of nature, ii. 6 (φύσει καὶ αὐτοδιδάκτοις ἐννοίαις, μᾶλλον δὲ θεοδιδάκτοις), and elsewhere φυσικαὶ ἐννοίαι.

On the appropriations from the Hebrews, Books ix. and x.

NOTE III., p. 13.

Celsus appears to have used the same imputation of being copyists against the Hebrews: and to have been confuted by Origen on account of the greater antiquity of the Jewish histories. Stillingfleet, Orig. Sac. ch. i. (vol. i. p. 16, Oxf. ed.)

NOTE IV., p. 14.

Saint Augustine traced the prophecies of Christ in the Sibylline Books (De Civ. Dei, B. xviii. c. 23). Like the other Christian apologists, he commonly treats the heathen deities as real spirits of

evil. He seems, in part, like Eusebius, to resolve the personages of the Greek and Roman Mythology into, 1. Men deified after death, 2. Elements or Nature Powers, 3. Dæmones (De Civ. Dei., B. xviii. c. 14). He recognises divine aid given to the philosophers of Greece (de Civ. Dei, B. ii. c. 7): and in tracing the history of the two *Civitates*, the *Cælestis*, and the *Terrestris*, he says (B. xvi. c. 10), that probably there were children of the former in the latter, as well as of the latter in the former.

NOTE V., p. 22.

Mr. Grote remarks upon this anthropomorphic genius of the Hellenic religion, under the name of an universal "tendency to personification."—"History of Greece," i. 462. Mr. Ruskin has some striking observations on the same subject.

NOTE VI., p. 23.

Apollo. Mr. Max Müller says, in his most able work on 'Language,' vol. ii. p. 433, that Apollo drew to himself the worship of the Dorian family, Athenè of the Ionian, Poseidon of the Æolian, but that the worship of Zeus reached over all. I venture to doubt the accuracy of this classification. The Greek mythology was eminently favourable, as one of popular idolatry, to the development of particular local worships, and the preferences were much associated with race. But it would surprise me to see any proof that the worship of Apollo, or that of Athenè, was anything less than universal among the Greeks. The invaluable work of Pausanias, with its careful and patient enumerations, appears to form a conclusive standard of appeal on this subject.

On the character of Apollo, see C. O. Müller's 'Dorians,' Lewis and Tuffnell's translation, i. 329.

NOTE VII., p. 25.

The word "jovial" appears to be one of that group of words, too little noticed, which have come into the English tongue direct from the Italian, and to abound in our old authors. It is explained by Johnson as meaning, 1. Under the influence of Jupiter, 2. Gay, airy, merry. But I do not find in any of our dictionaries or word-books which I have consulted any notice of what appears to be its

differentia, and to make it reflect the idea of the Olympian life : namely, that in its proper use it does not mean merriment simply, but an elevated or royal kind of merriment. Thus Drayton speaks of the “ princely jovial fowl : ” and the sense is exactly touched in a speech of Lear (Act iv., Scene 6)—

What ?

I will be jovial : *come come, I am a king,*

My masters, know you that.

This distinctive flavour of the sense has been in part rubbed out : yet jovial is not even now synonymous with merry : we should more properly say jovial men, merry children, than *vice versâ*.

NOTE VIII., p. 26.

It is worthy of remark, that in Homer the political life of man is reflected even as to some portion of its detail by the divine life. The institution of the βουλῇ, or council, was already well marked off from that of the ἀγορῇ, or Assembly. So the ordinary meeting on Olympus seems to be the βουλῇ, but this, which precedes the Theomachy, to correspond with the Assembly.

NOTE IX., p. 29.

The Sun in the ‘ Iliad,’ see II. xviii.—

ἥελιον δ’ ἀκάμαντα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη.
πέμψεν ἐπ’ Ὠκεανοῖο ῥοὰς ἀέκοντα νέεσθαι.

Why being thus passive, and scarcely animate, is the planet represented as unwilling? The answer must be founded on conjecture. But I conceive it to be probably this. The Trojan worship seems to have been more elemental than the Greek : so the Sun was unwilling to cut short that famous day, which was to be the last day of prosperity to the Trojan arms.

In the ‘ Odyssey ’ we have no mention of the worship of the Sun by the Greeks : and when Eurypulos in Thrinakiè persuades his companions to slay the oxen of that deity for food, he says, “ when we return to Ithaca, we can make him a rich temple and precinct, with abundant votive gifts ” (Od. xii. 346).

πίονα νηὸν

τεύξομεν, ἐν δέ κε θεῖμεν ἀγάλματα παλλὰ καὶ ἐσθλά,

thus raising the inference that he had none already existing in that very small island.

NOTE X., p. 29.

On the Invocation of Rivers.

It is probable that these may have been admitted more or less into purely local worship: the old Pelasgian system could not be, and as we know was not, without influence, especially apart from the greater centres, upon the religion of the country. It may be from this cause that Achilles in Troja not only invokes his own Spercheios, but mentions his father's prayer and vow to offer an hecatomb to the stream, in the place where was its glebe and altar. In this class of cases, the anthropomorphic force of the Greek system showed itself by investing the rivers with human forms. Achelous, the most famous of them, fought against Herakles for Deianira, sought her hand, and had many other wives. Odysseus invokes the river in Corfu, but then he is in the sphere of the outer geography, and of a theology differing from the Greek. Asteropaios, a Pæonian hero, is grandson to the River Axios. My conjecture respecting the significance of the dual name, Xanthus and Scamandros, is only one step in advance of the most current, and also conjectural, interpretation, which treats the divine name as senior, the human one as more recent.

NOTE XI., p. 30.

The single clear trace that I remember to have perceived in Homer of the elemental creed is this, that, in one single passage, he calls the sacrificial fire by the name of Hephaistos, the god of fire. II. ii. 426.

NOTE XII., p. 37.

On this subject, as a testimony *instar omnium*, see the passage in Aristophanes Νεφ. 1087-1100.

NOTE XIII., p. 37.

“Philippus of Crotona was actually deified by the inhabitants of Segeste, and had sacrifices offered to him in his lifetime on account of his beauty. Cypselus instituted prizes for beauty: while such was the honour conferred by its possession, that Elpinice, the sister of Cimon, did not hesitate to sit as model to Polygnotus.”—Falkener's ‘Dædalus,’ p. 33, note.

NOTE XIV., p. 38.

On the contrary, in the *Clouds*, v. 540, Aristophanes takes credit to himself because his play made no jest upon baldness—

οὐδ' ἔσκωψε τοὺς φαλάκρους,

and this is believed to be a rebuke to Eupolis for having condescended to ridicule Aristophanes himself on the score of baldness (Mitchell in loc.). The conclusion I have stated in the text as to caricature, seems to me, on the whole, to be supported by the collection of instances in the work of Champfleury. (*'Histoire de la Caricature Antique,'* par Champfleury. Dentu, Paris.) Neither do I find anything to shake this conclusion in the recent work of Mr. Wright (*'History of Caricature and of Grotesque in Art.'* London, 1865). On the use of caricature for religion, see Lecky's *Rationalism,'* vol. ii., p. 1.

NOTE XV., p. 45.

The Zeus of Phidias at Olympia is stated to have been sixty feet high, and the Athene of the Parthenon forty.—Falkener's *'Dædalus,'* p. 94.

NOTE XVI., p. 57.

It has been, perhaps, too little noticed that the expedition of Alexander, by carrying not only the political, but especially the intellectual, dominion of Greece through the East, was no less signally a Preparation for the Gospel than was the growth of the Roman Power, which placed the civilised world under the sway of a single sceptre (S. Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, B. xviii. c. 22). The dissolution of Alexander's empire after his death has made us take for a short-lived, meteor-like phenomenon, what really was a great work, with results not less permanent than wide-spread. Its importance reached a climax in the Translation of the Jewish Scriptures executed by the Seventy.

NOTE XVII., p. 61.

Vividly described by Lecky, *'Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe,'* vol. ii. p. 28. The same principle runs through Church History: as where the admirable Mère Marie-Angélique Arnauld describes the Infirmaries in her convent as "*basses et humides comme des caves,*" making the nuns ill, and yet "*cela ne les dégoutoit point. Dieu nous en envoya plusieurs.*" (*Relations du Port Royal*, p. 30.)

NOTE XVIII., p. 61.

Saint Augustine says of the body, *ad ipsam naturam hominis pectinet* (De Civ. Dei, i. 13). Eusebius in his account of the Hebrew religion shows a tendency to depreciate this constituent part of man, when he relates that they viewed it simply as a space for the soul to dwell in (τὸ δὲ, τοῦτον χώραν περιβολῆς ἐπέχειν), and says all bodily pleasures are no higher than those of the brute creation (B. v. c. 4). Saint Augustine had felt deeply the influence of the Greek philosophy, and hence perhaps it is that with his warmly-coloured views he combined so much breadth of conception.

